

Candidate Questionnaire on Austin Energy Issues

Participating Organizations:

- Public Citizen
- SEED Coalition
- Sierra Club
- Solar Austin
- Texas ROSE (Ratepayers' Organization to Save Energy)
- Clean Water Action
- Austin Climate Action Network
- Texas Drought Project
- First Unitarian Universalist Green Sanctuary Ministry
- Wildflower Unitarian Universalist Church

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- 1. The mission of the Austin Energy Department is to deliver clean, affordable reliable energy and excellent customer service. During your term, what will be the most important challenge for the city in regard to Austin Energy?**

The most important challenge is likely to be cost control and reliability in light of environmental mandates against coal, gas, and nuclear power generation.

- 2. From a citywide and district perspective, briefly describe your vision for managing and improving Austin Energy?**

My vision is for AE to be managed as a low-cost provider of reliable electric power. The added costs to ratepayers of choices that are made to satisfy additional environmental, economic development (job creation) or social policy goals should be transparently publicized.

- 3. What is your position on climate change?**

As relates to AE, added costs to ratepayers of choices that are made with the intent of affecting global climate should be transparently publicized per the vision described above. To the extent that carbon sequestration is an appropriate goal, lowest unit cost methods of sequestration should be embraced. Choices made based on predictions of secondary impacts of global warming (drought, storm intensity, etc.) should consider the uncertainty of the primary and secondary predictions.

- 4. Do you support implementation of the recommendations in the report developed by the [Austin Generation Resource Planning Task Force](#) and are there any other specific changes you would like made to the [Austin Energy Resource, Generation and Climate Protection Plan to 2020](#)? What would you change and how?**

The recommendations are heavily influenced by environmental and social policy considerations. I support those that promote the provision of low cost power. The cost of those that promote other considerations should be transparently publicized and choices made with eyes open to the economic consequences to ratepayers.

- 5. City Council serves as the board of directors for Austin Energy. As a council member, what do you consider your role to be in regard to Austin Energy's governance?**

Council's role should be to ensure that an effective management team is in place and that the least possible constraints are imposed that could affect the efficient execution of AE's operations.

6. What renewable energy resources and programs should be incorporated into the Austin Energy generation resource mix?

Renewables that result in the lowest cost to ratepayers should be incorporated. Any subsidy required to provide other than the low-cost solution should be transparently publicized along with the business case therefor.

7. How and to what extent should Austin Energy provide customer energy efficiency programs?

Subsidized energy efficiency programs for our economically disadvantaged population appear to be justified by the circular argument that the disadvantaged don't have the resources necessary to take advantage of subsidized energy efficiency programs for other customers. Make the economic case for any program at all (such as energy efficiency costs vs. peak generation capacity savings), and transparently publicize any transfers or similar economic assistance.

8. What are your thoughts on whether Austin Energy should invest in more nuclear reactors and whether the utility should remain involved in the existing South Texas Project reactors after their currently scheduled retirement dates of 2027 and 2028 if they get relicensed for 20 additional years?

The task force appears to have been silent on the nuclear issue. I support remaining involved in a relicensed STP project. Whether to invest in more nuclear capacity depends on the business case for it.